



Co-Chairs' Statement

Megacities, which are home to more than 10 million inhabitants, are not only hubs of opportunities and challenges, but also forces that shape the world.

The first Megacities Summit was held in Istanbul, a city that connects different geographies and cultures. The Summit brought together mayors and senior officials from megacities across the world¹ to share practical solutions to their common problems and to harness the potential of megacities. The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Metropolis, the World Association of Major Metropolises, jointly organised the Summit after celebrating World Metropolitan Day (October 7) in Istanbul.

Currently, there are 43 megacities in the world and more are expected to emerge. Most of these megacities have populations ranging from 10 to 15 million, while a few have more than 25 million. **Some forecasts for 2100 suggest that there will be at least 10 cities with more than 50 million inhabitants by then. Megacities are a reality and they are not going away.**

Yet there is a concerning gap between the population size and the political influence of cities in the world. **Among the 193 UN member states, 105 have less than 10 million people, but they still have more power and resources than any of the megacities.** This poses the question of how to ensure the representation of megacities in global decision-making and resource distribution. Megacities face the challenge of delivering, at an adequate scale, services and infrastructure to their communities and improving their quality of life with powers, competencies and resources that are often inadequate for the task.

Megacities are diverse and complex entities that demand tailored public policies. In the face of complex emergencies, megacities need to act swiftly and effectively to address the needs and aspirations of their people. Megacities are also crucial for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as they host a large proportion of human activities. Their leaders are determined to contribute to solving the challenges of humanity, as well as their own. Therefore, collaboration between megacities offers an opportunity for positive change.

Equitable access to services in megacities

Megacities play a crucial role in their countries' economic development. They generate a significant amount of their nations' income, far exceeding their population size. This income stems from their ability to foster innovation, productivity, talent and diversity. Megacities are vital for their countries' performance and are key players in the global economy as they often connect with near and far places in a network of trade and exchange.

Megacity challenges are not only about bringing more and better infrastructure and services to their populations, but about becoming better places for the people and the planet. In other words, to create a caring society for all. Yet to create a more caring society, megacities need to unlearn the structures that have produced spatial and social inequalities. Learning from the past can help megacities foster a sense of



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¹ Namely megacities of Baghdad, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Dhaka, Ho Chi Minh City, Guazngzhou, Lahore, São Paulo, and guest cities Barcelona, Florence and Ramallah. Ambassador of India to Ankara presented "India's takeaways from the Urban20 process under India's G20 Presidency".



community based on proximity, interaction and belonging. Envisioning the future can help them leverage the diversity and richness of their people and places and cultivate collective empathy.

Innovative financing models

Megacities play a key role in driving investment that can shape the transition to a greener economy and more equitable society. However, they still lack a cutting-edge finance agenda to succeed. Without financing, megacities simply cannot achieve the rapid and large-scale shift to a more inclusive and sustainable model. The Global Commission for Urban SDG Finance, established in June 2023 and co-led by Nobel Prize winner Jeffrey Sachs²; Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo; and Mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Eduardo Paes, is a key initiative to bridge the gap in financing where it is most effective and needed. Enhancing megacities' capacities to access more resources from the international system, which is largely dominated by states, and grow their capacity to participate in financial markets is the key factor that will take them to the next level.

Looking into the future

Megacities are more than just bigger versions of cities. They face unique opportunities and challenges that demand different approaches and frameworks. The first Megacities Summit has shown the potential and the feasibility of such platforms that enable a dialogue among megacities. For instance, megacities have a key role in working with other local governments under the Global Task Force, facilitated by United Cities and Local Governments, to influence the multilateral system and especially the UN Advisory Group that engages local and regional governments in achieving the SDGs and preparing for the Future Summit.

Megacities need to be ready for the future. To empower decision-makers, it is essential to increase their data capacity and analysis to understand their ecosystem and population needs better, as well as their foresight capacity to anticipate action. Foresight becomes an essential tool for maintaining the liveability of megacities in the long term as they face complex and unprecedented changes.

The future of the planet and the well-being of most of its 7 billion people depend on the success of megacities. The choices made today will determine whether megacities are part of the problem or part of the solution. Many megacities are already taking steps to enhance their transport, water, sanitation, renewable energy, urban planning, health and housing systems. Others may fall behind. However, they all need leadership and collaboration to tackle the common challenges they face now and in the future. Instead of creating new structures, Metropolis, the global network of major cities and metropolitan areas, will facilitate and support this cooperation and exchange among peers. We believe in a brighter future for megacities and we invite you to work with us to achieve this vision.

In this regard, as Co-Chairs, we welcome the proposal made by the Municipality of São Paulo to host the next Megacities Summit in 2024 in São Paulo.

Megacities have a bright future ahead, join us in achieving this vision.